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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chief, Technical Branch

DATE: 30 September 1954

FROM [redacted]

SUBJECT: National Meetings of the American Psychological Association

1. The National Meetings of the American Psychological Association were held in New York City, 3 through 8 September 1954. The program included a good many papers in clinical psychology and the features of this years meeting were the number of symposia held. In order to accommodate the large number of people, two or three symposia were held concurrently. Thus, it was impossible to cover all papers of interest.

2. In discussions with many psychologists, I found there was increasing interest in hypnosis in the colleges and more experimental work was being done in this area although strangely enough there were no papers on this subject at this meeting.

3. Another field of interest which was reflected both in the papers and in private discussion was the use of drugs. It is generally felt that contributions to the theory and understanding of personalities can be made through the investigation of behavior under the influence of drugs and universities, particularly in conjunction with medical schools, are carrying on research with many types of drugs including mescaline and LSD. Apparently, LSD is easily obtainable.

4. In the symposium, "Affects of Drugs on Behavior," Dr. G. R. Wendt gave a paper in which he described the application of barbiturates, which he did not name, to students who were paid for being subjects. He administered both exhilarating and depressive drugs. The subjects were observed through one-way glass and were also checked by having them fill out a list of adjectives. Thus, if a subject checked happy, joyful, pleasant, etc., it was considered that the drug had the effect of exhilaration and if the subject checked angry, sad, etc., it was considered to be depressive. When part of the subjects were given depressive drugs and part were given exhilarating drugs, it was found that the effects of the exhilarating drugs were decreased. When all were given exhilarating drugs each of the subjects seemed to stimulate the others and, hence, there was an enhanced effect. In questioning, after the paper, Dr. Wendt was somewhat evasive and answered criticism by saying you can't have a simple-minded explanation, that drugs had unusual effects.

5. Murray Jorvik gave a paper on the "Use of Drugs in General," classifying them into exhilarating, depressive, patho-genic and miscellaneous. Under the heading of patho-genic drugs, he included mescaline, LSD-Lysergic Acid, and adrenochrome and indicated that there was increasing interest and more experimentation with patho-genic drugs.

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6. Covin Kornetsky presented a paper on the "Effects of Withdrawal in Drug Addiction" on patients at the Lexington Hospital. Nothing of interest to our program was presented.

7. Daniel Wilner gave a paper on "Drug Addiction in Juveniles in New York City." Although interesting, there was no pertinent information for our purposes.

8. Dr. Joseph Zubin, who also has done work with drugs, was Chairman of this symposium. He again indicated the increasing interest in experimentation with drugs.

9. In another symposium, Dr. Fred Browne described an experiment in which the Rorshach test was administered to subjects under the influence of LSD. He found that the tests showed differences from normal state and under the influence of this drug the subjects were self-critical and interpreted their own scores.

10. Dr. Webster of McGill University described to me a research project carried out by the Canadian Army. This research was alluded to in the presidential address at the convention. Students who were paid $20.00 a day were used as subjects. In the experiment they attempted to eliminate as far as possible all sensations. The students were blindfolded and their ears were covered with foam rubber and their feet and hands were covered with large mits and they were placed in soundproof rooms. However, at the request of the subject, they could have as much water and as much food as they wanted and could sleep as much as they wanted on a comfortable bed. Also, when requested, childish rhymes would be read to them. In the early phase of the experiment, a humming noise was induced but this was discontinued. The subjects tended to lose their sense of time. They became very irritable and requested time after time to hear the simple childish rhymes. None of the subjects held out longer than a week. This experiment gets at some of the psychological factors found in prisoners-of-war treatment where the individual is completely isolated in solitary confinement.

11. Dr. Albert Ax from the Washington University School of Medicine, presented a paper on the quantitative effects of sleep deprivation. Students acted as subjects. The sleep deprivation was moderate--eight hours. Other subjects were disturbed during their sleeping period and the controlled group had undisturbed sleep. Loss of sleep and disturbed sleep lowered test scores. Interesting tests, however, causing greater motivation, showed less loss in score and there was a tendency to compensate for fatigue by greater effort.

12. Another paper was presented on the psychological effects of starvation with hard physical work. This work was done in the Laboratory of Physiological Hygiene at the University of Minnesota.

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Twelve college male students fasted for four and one-half days. However, water intake was not restricted. They worked for several hours on a treadmill apparatus. This showed a decrease in physical tests but there was no decrement in intellectual test scores. The subjects showed quick response to emergency rations. The above two experiments are also along the lines of treatment of prisoners of war but do not go far enough.

13. Another interesting paper was the following up on the occupational success of Air Force Cadets who took test in 1943-44 and it was found in most instances that high scores were associated with occupational success in civilian life.

14. Other papers were attended in the clinical and industrial area but the papers were of technical or general interest.

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